

REMARKS

The present application contains claims 1-30. Claims 12, 21 and 23-30 have been allowed. Claims 4, 5, 7 and 10 will be allowed upon amendment to include all of the limitations of their base claim and any intervening claims. Claims 4, 5, 7 and 10 have been so amended where appropriate. Claims 1, 4, 5, 7, 9, 11, 13-15, 19 and 22 have been amended.

Claims 1-3, 6, 8, 9, 11, 13-20 and 22 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) based upon Akihiro (JP-05-203856), which is one of the documents set forth in the Information Disclosure Statement filed with the United States Patent and Trademark Office on June 4, 2004.

Making reference to the detailed Office Action in which the examiner relies upon JP '856, the significant difference between the present invention and JP '856 is that the light shield member 12 has a portion 12b which engages a fixed, stationary "corner part a" of camera main body 1 to move away from the optical light path as the lens system moves from a left-hand position shown in Fig. 1 toward a right-hand position shown in Fig. 2 of JP'856. To the contrary, the light shield member of the present invention, in all embodiments, engages a moveable lens holder. Note, for example, Fig. 1 in which the light shield member 5 is provided with a cam follower 5a which engages the outer periphery of the second lens frame 4 and a cam slope 4d. A biasing spring (not shown) normally urges the light shield 5 in a clockwise direction. When the lens frame 4 moves

toward the right, the cam follower 5a slides along the cam surface 4d and moves further away from the optical axis O. When lens frame 4 moves to the left, cam follower 5a moves downwardly along the cam surface 4d and thus moves closer to optical axis O.

Note Figure 3. The other embodiments are similar in nature. JP '856 does not teach this arrangement. Claim 1 has been amended to recite "a moveable flare diaphragm disposed on an optical path of lenses or in a vicinity thereof and having a portion thereof making sliding engagement with a lens holding frame such that said flare diaphragm respectively, advances in a direction toward and retreats in an opposition direction away from the optical path for cutting deleterious light responsive to said lenses and at least one said lens frame moving from a projected direction and collapsing along an optical axis." Claims 2, 3, 6 and 8 all depend from 1 and thus patentably distinguish over JP '856.

Claim 9 has been amended to recite that the light shield is driven by a member driven by said motor (see Figs. 13 and 15-18). Claims 13 through 15 have been amended in a manner similar to the amendment made to claim 1. Claims 16-18 would require no amendment since they depend from an amended independent claim. Claim 19 has been amended in a manner similar to the amendment to claim 1.

Regarding claims 11 and 20, JP '856 teaches a **rigid light** shielding member and not a flexible member. Claims 11 and 20 have been amended to more clearly recite, "wherein said flare diaphragm is formed by a flexible member which undergoes

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increasing flexing when advanced into the optical path and decreasing flexing when retreated from the optical path."

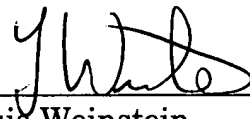
Claim 22 has been amended in a manner similar to claim 1.

In view of the foregoing, it is submitted that Claims 4-7 are now allowable and Claims 1-3, 6, 8, 9, 11, 13-20 and 22 patentably distinguish over the art of record and therefore, these Claims should be allowed together with allowable Claims 4-7 and allowed Claims 12, 21 and 23-30.

Favorable action is awaited.

Respectfully submitted,

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